Obstacles in **development of power sector**

†1451. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the power sector has become a subject of serious concern in the country as per the assessment made by the Planning Commission;

(b) if so, whether Government have identified the main obstacles coming in the way of development of power sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (c) According to the Planning Commission, shortage of power and lack of access continue to be a major constraint in the economic growth and that the greatest weakness in the power sector is on the distribution side which is entirely in the domain of the State.

The Government has launched the following major initiatives to overcome the problems of the power sector and to make it competitive and viable:

* A meeting of Power Ministers of States was held and it was agreed that immediate action be taken for the commencement of new projects in the State sector as well as through competitive bidding. Adequate preparatory work regarding provision of land, water, clearance, and fuel tie up would be undertaken. Timely placement of order as well as project execution would be carefully monitored to see that targets are achieved.
* XI Plan Working Group on Power has proposed sizeable growth in the generating capacity.
* 50,000 MW hydro initiative has been launched for coordinated development of hydro sector.
* For creation of bankable shelf of thermal projects, sites aggregating to over 1,00,000 MW have been identified.
* Development of ultra Mega Power Projects of about 4000 MW capacity each under tariff based competitive bidding route.
* Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP)

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

has been launched in order to reduce Aggregate Technical and Commercial losses, improving quality of supply of power, increasing revenue collection, improving consumer satisfaction.

* Periodical ratings of State power utilities for assessing the progress of reforms.

* Permitting stand alone systems for accelerating electrification in rural areas.

* Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana was launched for Accelerated rural electrification of villages and rural households.

* Promoting trading of electricity for better utilization of generation assets.

Transparent policies regarding subsidies.

* Accelerated Generation and Supply Programme (AG & SP) to support capacity augmentation through renovation and modernization and new generation schemes.

* Power stations with low PLF have been identified and are linked with better performing stations under the scheme "Partnership for Excellence" for adopting better operational practices.

* Enhancement of Inter-State and Inter-regional transfer of power by strengthening of inter-regional transmission links eventually leading to formation of National Grid.

* Implementation of energy conservation measures. Bureau of Energy Efficiency has been set up under the Energy Conservation Act.

* Open access in distribution in phases as per regulations framed by State Electricity Regulatory Commissions.

Electrification of villages

1452. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Finance Minister in his Budget Speech of 2005-06 had stated that electricity would be provided to the remaining 1,25,000 villages in the country and 2.3 crore households will be provided with electricity connection under Bharat Nirman; and